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15. — *The Cotton Kingdom : a Traveller's Observations on Cotton and Slavery in the American States. Based upon Three former Volumes of Journeys and Investigations by the same Author.* By FREDERICK LAW OLMSTED. In Two Volumes. New York : Mason Brothers. 1861. 16mo. pp. 376, 404.

WE have on previous occasions expressed our high sense of the worth of Mr. Olmsted's investigations. They are valuable, because they give us, not estimates or conjectures, but detailed facts ; because they are directed mainly to the elucidation of one point, namely, the superiority of free to slave labor on economical grounds ; and because the author evidently undertook his journeys not in order to verify previously formed opinions, but to collect materials for forming his opinions. Whatever praise we have bestowed on the previous volumes belongs more emphatically to these two ; for they enable the reader with a much smaller expense of time, not only to acquaint himself with Mr. Olmsted's generalizations, results, and conclusions, but to examine specimens of each class of observations, and of every kind of evidence from which he drew his inferences.

16. — *National Hymns, how they are written, and how they are not written. A Lyric and National Study for the Times. With a Letter to the Saturday Review.* By RICHARD GRANT WHITE. New York : Rudd and Carleton. 1861. 12mo. pp. 176.

THE result of the recent attempt to procure a national hymn might have been written when the prize was offered with as entire certainty as after the last session of the committee of award. Neither verses nor music for such a hymn can be composed as a piece of task-work, or for the hope of gain or fame ; and, even were interested motives wholly wanting, it is impossible that the ordeal of microscopic criticism through which the piece was to pass should not "cast a shadow before" dense enough to befog the sense of patriotism and the soul of harmony. National hymns and airs must be adopted, not made to order. From the competition, when instituted, true poets will hang back, unless poverty-stricken, and if sheer want drives them to it, it will be as to mere hand-work without heart or soul. It is admitted that no work of this kind has ever been the product of set purpose and elaboration for that express end. "God save the King" was at least a century in growing, and it is by no means certain that its germ was not a song of loyalty to the last of the Stuarts ; while the melody has undergone great changes, and its authorship in its earliest form is a matter of controversy. The